

December 2002 State of Wisconsin  
Employee Trust Funds

# Strengthening Citizen Confidence in Wisconsin's Public Officials

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## POLITICAL MARKET

### Conscientious Rail-road President to Dealer:

"Ah! Let me see. I think I'll take this bunch of Legislators at \$5000 a head. The Senators, at what price did you say?"

Dealer: "Can't afford 'em less than \$10,000 each."

R.R.P.: "Well, hand them over. I suppose I'll have to take the lot."

Dealer: "Anything else to-day? I have a lot of Editors, at various prices, from a Thousand down to Fifty Cents."

R.R.P.: "No, nothing in that way, to-day. But I want a Governor very much indeed, and will stand \$50,000 for him. Get me a Wisconsin one, if possible!"



Cartoon published in  
*Harper's Weekly* of June 12,  
1858, at the time of the  
Land Grant Investigation<sup>2</sup>

# State Public Officials [19.42(13)]

Individuals appointed by the Governor – ETF Board (one member), Deferred Compensation Board (five members), Private Employer Health Care Coverage Board (eleven members)

Department Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Executive Assistant, and Division Administrators

# Use of Office For Private Benefit [19.45(2)]

- No state public official
- May use his or her position
- To obtain financial gain or anything of substantial value
- For the private benefit of himself or herself,
- Or his or her immediate family,
- Or for an organization with which the official is associated.

# Food, Drink Transportation and Lodging [19.45(3m)]

No state public official

May accept

Transportation, lodging, meals, food or beverage

Except in accordance with s. 19.56(3).

# Influence and Reward [19.45(3)]

No state public official

May solicit or accept

Anything of value

If it could reasonably be expected to influence  
the official's judgment

Or could reasonably be considered a reward  
for official action.

# Lobbying Law [13.625]

No agency official

May accept from a lobbyist

Or from a business or organization that employs a lobbyist

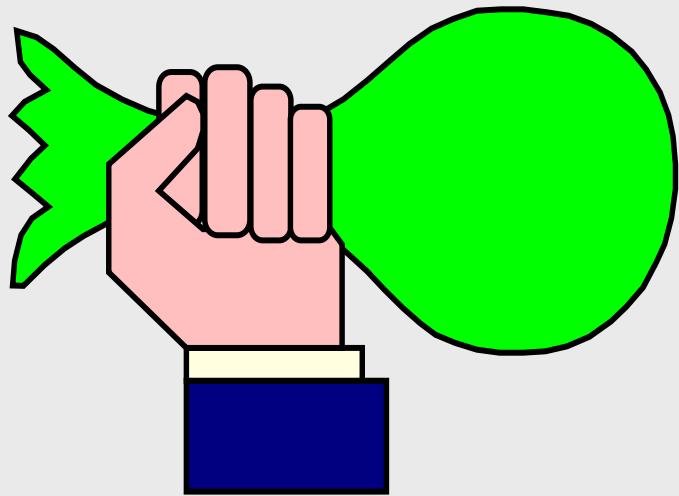
Anything of pecuniary value

Except --

Campaign contributions

Reimbursement for  
presenting a talk

Items and services a lobbying  
principal makes available to  
the general public



# Dealing with gifts and favors

## Statutory restraints

(except as specifically authorized)

- Items or services *from lobbyists*
- Items or services *from organization that employ lobbyists*
- Food, drink, or travel *unless clearly unrelated to public position*
- Items or services offered *because of public position*
- Free or discounted transportation, traveling accommodation, or communication services for which the supplier would usually charge and that is withheld from others

# Dealing with gifts and favors

## Items specifically authorized

(except for free or discounted transportation, traveling accommodation, or communication services for which the supplier would usually charge)

- Items and services *unrelated to* public position *and not provided by a lobbyist or lobbying organization*
- Expenses *provided by or to the state*
- *Informational materials*
- *Expenses for talks* and programs when featured speaker about Employee Trust Fund issues
- Services, items, and reimbursements from *campaign committees*
- *Salary*, even if from a lobbying organization, if part-time board member

# Conflicting Interests [19.46(1)]

- No state public official
- May take any official action
- Substantially affecting a matter
- In which the official, a member of his or her immediate family, or an organization with which the official is associated
- Has a substantial financial interest.

# Disqualification and Abstention

You should vote on all matters before you

- Special treatment is required only when private interest is distinguishable from public's interests by nature or degree.
- Abstention is not cure for a conflict. Cure is removal of private interest that is conflicting with public responsibilities. Abstention, at best, is way to deal with short term or minor conflict.

# Use of Confidential Information for Private Gain [19.45(4)]

No state public official

May use or disclose

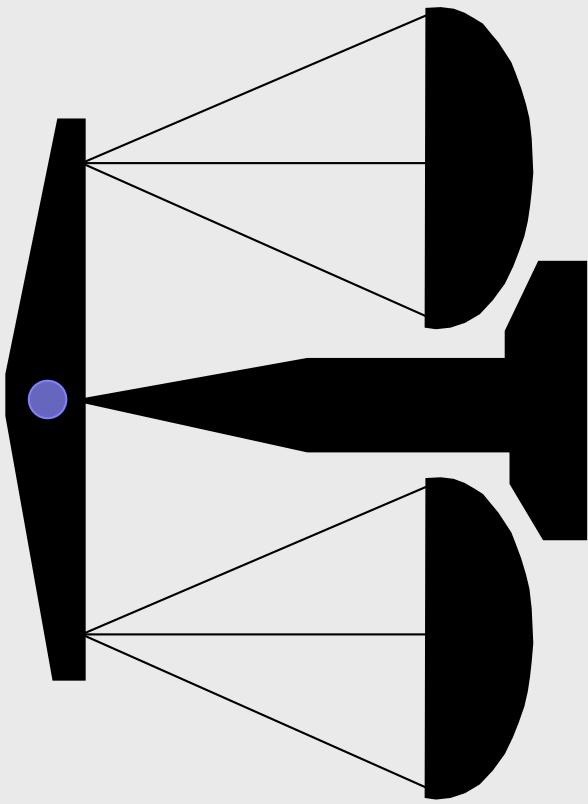
Information gained through official position or activities

In a way that could result in the receipt of anything of value for private benefit

If the information has not been communicated to the public or is not public information.

# Advisory Opinions

- Confidential
- Authoritative
- Consistent
- Written
- Insurance policy



# Where to get more information

- Web site – <http://ethics.state.wi.us>
- Guidelines
- Advisory opinions [Prompt, confidential, authoritative]
- Ethics Board's staff

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